

Create Your Own Fraudulent Nutrition Product

Introduction:

Advertisements for fraudulent nutrition products can often be detected simply by identifying the tactics employed in the ads. Students learn the “formula” for development of ads for fraudulent nutrition products by being asked to compose an advertisement for a made-up nutrition product in this activity.

Type of Activity:

Small group activity (3-6 students).

Preparation:

1. Copy worksheet 2, “Creating Your Own Fraudulent Nutrition Product” form, for student groups’ use.
2. Prepare visual aid using transparency master 2, “Example: Creating Your Own Fraudulent Nutrition Product.”

Purpose:

- To demonstrate to students that it’s not that difficult to come up with nutrition products that sound good in an advertisement but that are bogus.
- To provide students with the skills required to quickly identify advertisements for nutrition products that in all probability are fraudulent.

Instructions:

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-6 students. Give each group a copy of the form “Creating Your Own Fraudulent Nutrition Product.”
2. Have groups designate a leader (such as the student whose birthday is closest to the current date, or the student who lives the greatest distance from campus). The group leader keeps the discussion going and encourages group members to participate in the discussion.
3. Present the transparency of the example of a fraudulent nutrition product advertisement to clarify the group activity.

4. Allow student groups 10-15 minutes to develop their product and create an advertisement for the product. Let the class know that you'll be asking students to indicate which products they would have been tempted to buy as a result of the presentation in class.
5. Ask group leaders to present the results to the class.
6. After groups have reported, ask students if they would have been tempted to buy any of the nutrition products presented, and if so, which.

Names:

Worksheet 2

Creating Your Own Fraudulent Nutrition Product

1. Identify a common appearance, health, or vitality concern or problem that will be “fixed” by your fraudulent nutrition product.

2. Develop components of an advertisement for the product:
 - A. Give the product a name, state what the product is made from (for example vitamins, fatty acids, herbs) and connect the product to a biological process in the body.

 - B. Develop a scientific-sounding explanation for why the product works and refer to a scientific study that proves it does.

 - C. Dream up a few testimonials, or fake “expert” statements concerning the effectiveness of the product.

 - D. Include in the advertisement a money-back guarantee.

Source: Instructor’s Activity Book to accompany *Nutrition Now*, 4th edition by Judith E. Brown, RD, MPH, PhD, University of Minnesota